

RULES AND REGULATIONS

GOVERNING THE USE OF  
SANITARY SEWERS  
OF THE TOWN OF NORTHFIELD



Amended Board of Sewer Commissioners May 17,2023

TOWN OF NORTHFIELD  
SANITARY SEWERS RULES AND REGULATIONS

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# RULES AND REGULATIONS

## GOVERNING THE USE OF SANITARY SEWERS

### Town of Northfield

The Board of Sewer Commissioner in conjunction with the Selectboard of the Town of Northfield, acting in accordance with the provisions of 314 CMR 12.03(5) of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as amended, hereby adopt the following Rules and Regulations governing the connection to and use of the Town's common sewers.

The ByLaws are intended to be a *living document* and will need to be reviewed at regular intervals, e.g. yearly or when regulations mandate. It also reiterates the Commissioners' and Chief Operators responsibility to treat the ByLaws as a *living document* and to review or change it in case of any special circumstances that should arise.

#### **ARTICLE 1. DEFINITIONS**

Section 1. BOD — (denoting Biochemical Oxygen Demand) shall mean the quantity of oxygen utilized in the biochemical oxidation of organic matter under standard laboratory procedure in five (5) days at 20 degrees C (°C), expressed in milligrams per liter (mg/L).

Section 2. Building Drain — shall mean that part of the lowest horizontal piping of a drainage system which receives the discharge from soil, waste, and other drainage pipes inside the walls of the building and conveys it to the building sewer, beginning five (5) feet (1.5 meters) outside the inner face of the building wall.

Section 3. Building Sewer — shall mean the extension from the building drain to the public sewer or other place of disposal.

Section 4. Combined Sewer — shall mean a sewer receiving both sewage and surface runoff.

Section 5. Domestic Sewer or Sanitary Sewer — shall mean a sewer which carries sewage and to which storm, surface, and ground waters are not intentionally admitted.

Section 6. EPA — shall mean the Environmental Protection Agency of the United States government.

Section 7. Garbage — shall mean solid wastes from the domestic and commercial preparation, cooking, and dispensing of food, and from the handling, storage, and sale of produce.

Section 8. Industrial Wastes — shall mean the liquid wastes from industrial manufacturing processes, trade, or business as distinct from sanitary sewage.

Section 9. Natural Outlet — shall mean any outlet into a watercourse, pond, ditch, lake, or other body of surface or ground water.

Section 10. Person — shall mean any individual, firm, company, association, society, corporation, or group.

Section 11. pH — shall mean the logarithm of the reciprocal of the weight of hydrogen ions in grams per liter of solution.

Section 12. Properly Shredded Garbage — shall mean the wastes from the preparation, cooking, and dispensing of food that have been shredded to such a degree that all particles will be carried freely under the flow conditions normally prevailing in public sewers, with no particle greater than one-half (1/2) inch (1.27 centimeters) in any dimension.

Section 13. Public Sewer — shall mean a sewer in which all owners of abutting properties have equal rights and is controlled by public authority.

Section 14. Receiving Waters — shall mean any watercourse, river, pond, ditch, lake, aquifer, or other body of surface or groundwater receiving discharge of wastewater.

Section 15. Sewer Commissioners — this shall be the duly elected Sewer Commissioners of the Town of Northfield, acting in accordance with the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Sewer Commissioners may, from time to time, delegate its authority under portions of or all of these Rules and Regulations to various Town employees and/or representatives.

Section 16. Sewage — shall mean a combination of the water-carried wastes from residences, business buildings, institutions, and industrial establishments, together with such ground, surface and storm waters as may be present.

Section 17. Sewage Treatment Plant — shall mean any arrangement of devices and structures used for treating sewage.

Section 18. Sewage Works — shall mean all facilities for collecting, pumping, treating, and disposing of sewage.

Section 19. Sewer — shall mean a pipe or conduit for carrying sewage.

Section 20. Shall — is mandatory; "may" is permissive.

Section 21. Slug — shall mean any discharge of water, sewage, or industrial waste which in concentration of any given constituent or in quantity of flow exceeds for any period of duration longer than fifteen (15) minutes more than five (5) times the average twenty-four (24) hour concentration or flows during normal operation.

Section 22. Storm Drain — (sometimes termed "storm sewers") shall mean a sewer which carries storm and surface waters and drainage, but excludes sewage and industrial wastes, other than unpolluted cooling water.

Section 23. Suspended Solids — shall mean solids that either float on the surface of, or are in suspension in water, sewage, or other liquids, and which are removable by laboratory filtering.

Section 24. Town — shall mean the Town of Northfield, County of Franklin, Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Section 25. Watercourse — shall mean a channel in which a flow of water occurs, either continuously or intermittently.

Section 26. — The basis for all laboratory testing required hereunder and the definition of all laboratory or chemical terms used herein shall be the current edition of "Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater" as published by the American Public Health Association.

## **ARTICLE II. BUILDING SEWERS AND CONNECTIONS**

**Section 1. Permission Required** — No unauthorized person shall uncover, make any connections with or opening into, use, alter, extend, or disturb any public sewer or appurtenance thereof without first obtaining a written permit from the Sewer Commissioners.

Any person proposing a new discharge into the system or a substantial change in the volume or character of pollutants that are being discharged into the system shall notify and receive permission from the Sewer Commissioners at least forty-five (45) days prior to the proposed change or connection.

**Section 2. Permit Application and Connection Fee** — All new construction, large or small, that needs to connect to the Sewer, shall apply to the Sewer Commission and go through a process of review. New construction that has the potential of plant overuse or change in plant permit, must also go before the DEP for review. Application does not guarantee approval. There shall be two (2) classes of building sewer permits: (1) for residential and commercial service, and (2) for service to establishments producing industrial wastes. In either case, the owner or his agent shall make application on a special from furnished by the Sewer Commissioners. The permit application shall be supplemented by any plans, specifications, or other information considered pertinent in the judgement of the Sewer Commissioners. Effective May 2023, the Sewer Application fee is \$150.00, and the Sewer Hookup fee is \$2500.00

**Section 3. No Expense to Town** — The Sewer Commissioners, acting through its sewer department, will construct the building sewer from the common sewer to the property line. All costs and expense for the installation of this portion of the building sewer shall be borne by the applicant or property owner. The Town shall be indemnified from any loss or damages that may directly or indirectly be occasioned by the installation of this portion of the building sewer.

Hinder or dislodge the safety and permitted operations of the collection system and the plant.

The property owner shall construct the building sewer from the property line to within five (5) feet of the building. All costs and expense incident thereto shall be borne by the applicant or property owner. This construction shall be in accordance with the requirements of the Sewer Commissioners and as herein noted. No portion of this construction shall be “backfilled” or otherwise covered until inspected by the authorized agent of the Sewer Commissioners and written approval given therefor.

**Section 4. Special Event Application Process** — According to the Special Event Permit adopted by the Select Board, Special Events occurring within the collection system network shall be forwarded to the Superintendent for review. The Superintendent will inspect, review, question and approve/deny based on their findings and pertaining within the boundaries of the current Treatment plant permit. The Superintendent will then notify the Sewer Commissioners of any such finding.

**Section 5. Separate Building Sewers Required** — A separate and independent building sewer shall be provided for every building; except where one building stands at the rear of another on an interior lot and no private sewer is available or can be constructed to the rear building through an adjoining alley, court, yard, or driveway, the building sewer from the front building may be extended to the rear building.

**Section 6. Existing Building Sewers** — Old building sewers may be used in connection with new buildings only when they are found, on examination and test by the Sewer Commissioners, to meet all requirements of these Rules and Regulations.

Section 7. Installation Requirements — The size, slope, alignment, materials of construction of a building sewer, and the methods to be used in excavating, placing of the pipe, jointing, testing, and backfilling the trench, shall all conform to the requirements of the Sewer Commissioners. In the absence of the code provisions or in amplification thereof, the materials and procedures set forth in appropriate specifications of the A.S.T.M. and W.P.C.F. Manual of Practice No. 9 shall apply. The following are the basic requirements:

- a. All pipe shall have a minimum nominal diameter of six (6) inches, unless otherwise noted.
- b. Pipe material shall be PVC, cast iron, or similar material and subject to the approval of the Sewer Commissioners; all materials shall be of sufficient strength for the particular installation.
- c. Pipe joints shall be factory-made, compression-type joints. Pipe joints and connections shall be water-tight and gas-tight.
- d. Building sewers shall be laid straight to line and grade with a minimum pitch of one-quarter inch (1/4") per foot.
- e. All building sewers shall be carefully bedded in sand and backfilled to prevent damage.

Section 8. Gravity Flow — Whenever possible, the building sewer shall be brought to the building at an elevation below the basement floor. In all buildings in which any building drain is too low to permit gravity flow to the public sewer, sanitary sewage carried by such a building drain shall be lifted by an approved means and discharged to the building sewer.

Section 9. Surface and Groundwater Connections — No person shall make connection of roof downspouts, foundation drains, areaway drains, or other sources of surface runoff or groundwater to a building sewer or building drain which in turn is connected directly or indirectly to a public sanitary sewer. Sump or cellar pumps used for the control or relief of ground water and/or drainage shall not be discharged to the building sewer, either directly or indirectly.

Section 10. Code Requirements — The connection of the building sewer into the public sewer shall conform to the requirements of the building and plumbing code or other applicable rules and regulations of the Town, or the procedures set forth in appropriate specifications of the A.S.T.M. and the W.P.C.F. Manual of Practice No. 9. All connections shall be water-tight and gas-tight.

Section 11. Approval — The applicant for the building sewer permit shall notify the Sewer Commissioners when the building sewer is ready for inspection. The inspection will be made by a representative of the Sewer Commissioners, and written approval will be given if the installation is accepted. The building sewer shall not be covered or backfilled until this written approval is given.

Section 12. Safety Precautions — All excavations for building sewer installation shall be adequately guarded with barricades and lights so as to protect the public from hazard streets, sidewalks, parkways, and other public property disturbed in the course of the work shall be restored in a manner satisfactory to the Sewer Commissioners.

Section 13. Sewer Charges — The Sewer Commissioners shall establish annual sewer use fees and other necessary charges with suitable schedules therefor.

### **ARTICLE III. USE OF THE PUBLIC SEWERS**

**Section 1. Unpolluted Water Excluded** — No person shall discharge or cause to be discharged any stormwater, surface water, groundwater, roof runoff, subsurface drainage, uncontaminated cooling water, or unpolluted industrial process waters to any sanitary sewer.

Stormwater and all other unpolluted drainage shall be discharged to such sewers as are specifically designated as combined sewers or storm sewers, or to a natural outlet approved by the Sewer Commissioners. Industrial cooling water or unpolluted process waters may be discharged, on approval of the Sewer Commissioners, to a storm sewer, combined sewer, or natural outlet, subject to the discharger obtaining all other required Federal, State, and local permits and approvals as may be required under separate laws or regulations. Approval by the Sewer Commissioners shall not imply compliance with other applicable requirements not under the jurisdiction of the Sewer Commissioners.

**Section 2. General Discharge Prohibitions** — No person shall discharge or cause to be discharged directly or indirectly any substances, materials, waters, or wastes if it appears likely in the opinion of the Sewer Commissioners that such wastes can harm either the sewers, sewage treatment process, or equipment; have an adverse effect on the receiving waters; or can otherwise endanger life, limb, public property or constitute a nuisance. In determining the acceptability of these wastes, consideration shall be given to such factors as the quantities of such wastes in relation to flows and velocities in the sewers, construction of or materials comprising sewers, nature of the sewage treatment process, capacity of the sewage treatment process, degree of treatability of such wastes in the sewage treatment plant, and other pertinent factors.

Pollutants introduced into the sewage works by a non-domestic source shall not pass through the sewage treatment plant or interfere with the operation or performance of the sewage treatment plant.

Substances prohibited without prior written approval include, but are not limited to:

- a. **Fats, Oils, and Grease**: Any water or waste containing fats, wax, grease, or oils, whether emulsified or not, in excess of one hundred (100) mg/L or containing substances which may solidify or become viscous at temperatures between thirty-two (32) and one hundred fifty (150) °F (0 and 65 °C).
- b. **Improperly Shredded Garbage**: Any garbage that has not been properly shredded. The installation and operation of any garbage grinder shall be subject to the review and approval of the select board.
- c. **Toxic Pollutants**: Any waters or wastes containing toxic or poisonous solids, liquids, or gases of sufficient quantity, either singly or by interaction with other wastes, to injure animals, create a public nuisance, or create any hazard in the receiving waters of the sewage treatment plant.
- d. Addition of Restaurants and Commercial use: Refer to items a. and b.

Section 3. Prohibited Discharge Standards — No person shall discharge or cause to be discharged directly or indirectly any of the following described waters or wastes to any public sewers:

- a. Fire and Explosive Hazards: Any gasoline, fuel oil, or other flammable or explosive liquid, solid, or gas that creates a fire or explosion hazard in the sewage works.
- b. Corrosive Pollutants: Any waters or wastes having a pH lower than 5.5 or higher than 9.5 or having any other corrosive property capable of causing damage or hazard to structures, equipment, and personnel of the sewage works.
- c. Solid or Viscous Substances: Solid or viscous substances in amounts capable of causing obstruction to the flow in sewers, or other interference with the proper operation of the sewage works, and in no case solids greater than one-half inch (1/2") in any dimension.
- d. Temperature: Any heat in amounts that will inhibit biological activity at the sewage treatment plant resulting in interference, and in no case heat in such quantities that the temperature at the point of introduction into the sewage treatment plant exceeds 104° F (40° C).
- e. Radioactive Wastes: Any radioactive wastes or isotopes of such half-life or concentration as may exceed limits established by the Sewer Commissioners and/or as required in compliance with applicable State or Federal regulations.
- f. Mercury: Any waters or wastes containing more than one part per billion (ppb) of mercury.
- g. Surfactants: Any waste which will, or is likely to, either singly or by interaction with other discharges, cause foam to pass through the sewage treatment plant, or cause excessive foaming within the sewage treatment plant.
- h. Sewage Works Interference: Any materials which exert or cause:
  1. Unusual concentrations of inert suspended solids.
  2. Excessive discoloration.
  3. Unusual BOD, chemical oxygen demand, or chlorine released in a discharge at a flow rate and/or pollutant concentration which, either singly or by interaction with other pollutants, will cause interference with the sewage works.
  4. Unusual volume of flow or concentration of wastes constituting "slugs" as defined herein.
- i. Worker Health and Safety: Any pollutants which result in the presence of toxic, noxious, or malodorous gases, vapors, liquids, or fumes within the sewers or sewage treatment plant in a quantity that may cause acute worker health and safety problems.
- j. Public Nuisance: Any noxious or malodorous liquids, gases, solids, or other wastewater which, either singly or by interaction with other wastes, are sufficient to create a public nuisance or a hazard to life, or to prevent entry into the sewers for maintenance or repair.

Section 4. Violation of General Discharge Prohibitions or Prohibited Discharge Standards — If any waters or wastes are discharged, or are proposed to be discharged to the public sewers, which waters contain the substances or possess the characteristics enumerated in Sections 2 and/or 3 of this Article, and which, in the judgment of the Sewer Commissioners, may have a deleterious effect upon the sewage works, process, equipment, or receiving waters, or which otherwise create a hazard to life or constitute a public nuisance, the Sewer Commissioners may:

1. Reject the wastes.
2. Require pretreatment to an acceptable condition for discharge to the public sewers.
3. Require control over the quantities and rates of discharge, and/or
4. Require payment to cover the added cost of handling and treating the wastes not covered by existing taxes or sewer charges. If the Sewer Commissioners permits the pretreatment or equalization of waste flows, the design and installation of the plants and equipment shall be subject to the review and approval of the Sewer Commissioners, and subject to the requirements of all applicable codes, ordinances, and laws.

Section 5. Grease, Oil, and Sand Interceptors — Grease, oil and sand interceptors (traps) shall be provided when, in the opinion of the Sewer Commissioners, they are necessary for the proper handling of liquid wastes containing grease in excessive amounts, or any flammable wastes, sand, or other harmful ingredients; except that such interceptors shall not be required for private living quarters or dwelling units. All interceptors shall be of a type and capacity approved by the Sewer Commissioners and shall be located so as to be readily and easily accessible for cleaning and inspection. Each Sewer Account that contains an interceptor/trap must be notated on the customers account as having an interceptor/trap.

Section 6. Preliminary Treatment and Flow-Equalizing Facilities — Where preliminary treatment or flow equalizing facilities are provided for any waters or wastes, they shall be maintained continuously in satisfactory and effective operation by the owner at his expense.

Section 7. Control Manholes — When required by the Sewer Commissioners, the owner of any property serviced by a building sewer carrying industrial wastes shall install a suitable control manhole together with such necessary meters and other appurtenances in the building sewer to facilitate observation, sampling, and measurement of the wastes. Such manhole, when required, shall be constructed in accordance with plans approved by the Sewer Commissioners. The manhole shall be installed by the owner at his expense and shall be maintained by him/her/them so as to be safe and accessible at all times.

Section 8. Waste Testing — All measurements, tests, and analyses of the characteristics of waters and wastes to which reference is made in these Rules and Regulations shall be determined in accordance with the latest edition of “Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater” published by the American Public Health Association, and shall be determined at the control manhole provided, or upon suitable samples taken at said control manhole. In the event that no special manhole has been required, the control manhole shall be considered the nearest downstream manhole in the public sewer to the point at which the building sewer is connected.

Sampling shall be carried out by methods determined by the Sewer Commissioners to reflect the effect of constituents upon the sewage works and to determine the existence of hazards to life, limb, and property.

Section 9. Special Agreements — No statement contained in this Article shall be construed as preventing any special agreement or arrangement between the Town and any industrial concern whereby an industrial waste of unusual strength or character may be accepted by the Town for treatment, subject to payment therefor, by the industrial concern.

## **ARTICLE IV. PROTECTION FROM DAMAGE**

**Section 1. Violation** — No unauthorized person shall maliciously, willfully, or negligently break, damage, destroy, uncover, deface, or tamper with any structure, appurtenance, or equipment which is a part of the sewage works.

Any person violating this provision shall be subject to immediate arrest under charge of disorderly conduct and/or other applicable offense.

## **ARTICLE V. POWERS AND AUTHORITY OF INSPECTORS**

**Section 1. Entry to Private Property** — With due cause and notification, The Sewer Commissioners and other duly authorized employees and representatives of the Town bearing proper credentials and identification shall be permitted to enter all properties for the purposes of inspection, observation, measurement, sampling, and testing in accordance with the provisions of these Rules and Regulations. The Sewer Commissioners and its representatives shall have authority to inquire into any processes having a direct bearing on the kind and source of discharge to the sewers or waterways or facilities for waste treatment.

A minimum of 2 persons from the Board of Sewer Commissioners and/or the Selectboard and other duly authorized employees and representatives of the Town bearing proper credentials and identification shall be permitted to enter all private properties through which the Town holds a duly negotiated easement for the purposes of, but not limited to, inspection, observation, measurement, sampling, repair, and maintenance of any portion of the sewage works lying within said easement. All entry and subsequent work, if any, on said easement, shall be done in full accordance with the terms of the duly negotiated easement pertaining to the private property involved.

If digital photography is used for documentation, the photographs must be secured in a network folder. Digital photography must be purged no later than 4 years from original date. The photographs can never appear on any social media platform.

**Section 2. Liability of the Town** — While performing the necessary work on private properties referred to in Article V., Section 1 above, the Sewer Commissioners or duly authorized employees and representatives of the Town shall observe all safety rules applicable to the premises established by the person or company.

The Town shall hereby indemnify the company against loss or damage to its property by Town employees and against liability claims and demands for personal injury or property damage assessed against the company and growing out of the gauging and sampling operation, except as such may be caused by negligence or failure of the company to maintain safe conditions as required in Article III, Section 3.i.

## **ARTICLE VI. PENALTIES**

**Section 1. Notice of Violation** — Any person found to be violating any provisions of these Rules and Regulations, except Article VI, shall be served by the Town with written notice stating the nature of the violation and providing a reasonable time limit for the satisfactory correction thereof. The offender shall, within the period of time stated in such notice, permanently cease all violations.

**Section 2. Fine for Violations** — Any person who shall continue any violation beyond the time limit provided for in Article VI, Section 1 shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and on conviction thereof shall be fined in the amount not exceeding fifty (50) dollars for each violation. Each day in which any such violation shall continue shall be deemed a separate offense.

**Section 3. Liability for Violations** — Any person violating any of the provisions of these Rules and Regulations shall become liable to the Town for any expense, loss, or damage occasioned the Town by reason of such violation.

**ARTICLE VII. VALIDITY**

Section 1. — All Rules and Regulations or parts of Rules and Regulations in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

Section 2. — The invalidity of any section, clause, sentence, or provision of these Rules and Regulations shall not affect the validity of any other part of these Rules and Regulations which can be given effect without such invalid part or parts.

Section 3. — Board of Sewer Commissioners shall be substituted for Selectboard wherever this appears in these regulations if and when such Board is duly elected by the Town. The Board of Sewer Commissioners will determine collaboration with the Selectboard when such circumstances warrant.

**ARTICLE VIII. ADOPTION OF RULES AND REGULATIONS**

Section 1. — These Rules and Regulations, having been published in the Greenfield Recorder once each week for three successive weeks, were adopted by the Board of Sewer Commissioners at its duly called meeting on 5/17/2023.

**BOARD OF SEWER COMMISSIONERS**

Dan Gray, Chair  
Tom Walker  
Karen Boudreau

**CHIEF OPERATOR**

Isaac Golding

**SELECTBOARD**

Alexander Meisner, Chair  
Bernard Boudreau, Vice Chair  
Sarah Kerns, Clerk  
Heath Cummings  
Barbara Jacque